

[031] In Fig. 1, a reference number 2 denotes a rear, left section of a vehicle underbody wherein the vehicle is a multi-axle all-terrain vehicle. In a drive wheel 4 is placed a wheel head gearing 6 in the form of a planetary gear set. A jointed shaft 8 possesses pivotal linkages 10, 12 on both its ends, which enable toe-in or side deflection of the wheel 4. At the linkage 10, the jointed shaft 8 is so connected to the input of the wheel head, planetary gearing 6, that it can transmit torque thereto. At the linkage 12, the jointed shaft 8 is connected to an output of the connecting gear-train 14, the housing of which is rigidly bound to the underbody 2 of the vehicle. At the torque input end, the connecting gear-train 14 is connected with a drive shaft 16 of an electric drive motor 18. The drive motor 18, with its end which is proximal to the outside of the vehicle, is partially in an axial space 20 occupied by the drive wheel 4, but radially offset from the drive wheel 4. The housing of the connecting gear-train 14 is placed on that side of the drive wheel 4 and the drive motor 18, which is proximal to the center of the vehicle. The area of the underbody 2 within the connecting gear-train remains free from components of the drive, so that a free passage is allowed within the vehicle. The unsprung mass of the drive wheel 4 is small, since the connecting gear-train 14 and the drive motor 18 of the vehicle underbody 2 are sprung mounted. A sealing collar 22 is provided immediately in the area of the penetration of the jointed shaft 8 through the vehicle underbody 2. The drive motor 18 and the connecting gear-train 14 are also waterproofed as they are placed inside the vehicle underbody 2 and remain dry, even if the drive wheels 4 are entirely or partially immersed in water. The underbody 2 possesses an opening on the outside in an axial lengthening of the drive motor 18, so that the drive motor 8 is accessible for installation and maintenance purposes from the outside. This opening can be closed by a cover 24. The drive motor 18 and the connecting gear-train 14 are totally isolated from the effects of environmental conditions as well as being fired upon as they are within the armored vehicle underbody 2. Also, at this location, the generation of undesirable heat and noise emissions is very small.

1-17. (CANCELED)

18. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A[[n]] drive wheel unit (4, 14, 18) for an electrically driven multi-axle all terrain vehicle[[, with]] having a vehicular underbody (2) and a plurality of drive wheels (4) wheel units (4, 14, 18), each drive wheel unit (4, 14, 18) comprising:

a single independently sprung drive wheel (4) connected to a jointed shaft (8) having an end linkage (12) connected to an output of a drive train (14) fixedly mounted within the vehicle underbody (2);

a single drive motor (18) connected to an input of the drive train (14), the single drive motor (18) being fixedly mounted within the vehicle underbody (2) in a drive motor space that is radially offset from an outer circumference of the drive wheel (4) and is generally coplanar with the drive wheel (4);

the drive motor (18) and drive train (14) being sprung masses of the drive wheel unit (4, 14, 18) and the drive wheel (4) being an unsprung mass of the drive wheel unit (4, 14, 18); and

the drive wheel unit (4, 14, 18) being located peripherally to a central space within the vehicle underbody (2)

~~one drive with at least one drive motor (18) being assigned to each of the plurality of drive wheels (4), whereby each of the drive motors (18) is at least partially located in an available space (20) occupied by the drive wheel (4) but radially offset outward from the drive wheel (4) and for a torque transmitting connection of the drive motor (18) with the drive wheel (4), a connection gear-train (14) with a housing is provided, which is placed on a side of the drive wheel (4) and the drive motor (18) which is proximal to a center of the vehicle,~~

~~the housing of the connecting gear-train (14) is rigidly affixed to the underbody (2) of the vehicle and in that between an output shaft of the connection gear-chain and the drive wheel, a jointed shaft (8) is provided, which by means of an end linkage (12) is bound to the output shaft of the connecting gear-train (14).~~

19. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The vehicle according to claim 18, wherein the drive motor is [[made]] waterproof within the vehicle underbody (2), so that an area of

the drive motor (18) remains dry, when the drive wheel (4) is either entirely or partially under water.

20. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The vehicle according to claim 19, wherein the housing of the connecting gear-train (14) penetrates the vehicle underbody (2), and a seal is provided between the vehicle underbody (2) and the housing of the connecting gear-train (14), ~~a sealing means has been provided.~~

21. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The vehicle according to claim 19 wherein ~~[[the]]~~ an entire connecting gear-train (14) is ~~placed~~ waterproofed within the vehicle underbody (2), and the jointed shaft (8) penetrates the vehicle underbody (2), and a sealing collar (22) is provided between the jointed rod (8) and the vehicle underbody (2).

22. (WITHDRAWN) The vehicle according to claim 18, wherein at least two drive wheels (4), which are situated on one axle of the vehicle, are pivotally suspended and can be steered from a steering mechanism.

23. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The vehicle according to claim 18, wherein the drive wheel (4) accepts a wheel-head transmission (6), which is bound on a drive side with the jointed shaft (8).

24. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The vehicle according to claim 18, wherein the connection gear-train (14) is ~~designed as~~ a spur-gear-chain (26, 28, 30, 32).

25. (WITHDRAWN - CURRENTLY AMENDED) The vehicle according to claim 18, wherein the connection gear-train (14) is ~~designed as~~ a belt driven means of torque transmission.

26. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The vehicle according to claim 18, wherein the vehicle underbody (2) possesses on an outside, in an area of the drive motor (18), an opening which can be closed by a cover (24).

27. (WITHDRAWN - CURRENTLY AMENDED) The vehicle according to claim 18, wherein a connecting line (36), between an axis of rotation of the drive wheel (4) and an axis of rotation of the drive shaft of the drive motor (18), intersects with ~~[[the]]~~ a connecting line (38) of a rotational axes of two neighboring drive wheels (4) to ~~close~~ form an angle (α)~~[[,]]~~ which has a value between 30° and 75°.

28. (WITHDRAWN) The vehicle according to claim 18, wherein each drive wheel (4) of the vehicle is assigned to the at least one drive motor (18) and the connecting gear-train (14).

29. (WITHDRAWN - CURRENTLY AMENDED) The vehicle according to claim 18, wherein the connection gear-train (14) with the drive motors (18) of two neighboring drive wheels (4), which are located behind one another, are inclined toward one another so that an axis of rotation of drive shafts of the drive motors (18) lie in a horizontal direction between an axes of rotation of the drive wheels (4). ♦♦

30. (WITHDRAWN - CURRENTLY AMENDED) The vehicle according to claim 29, wherein the drive motors (18) of the two neighboring drive motors (4) are torque transmittingly coupled, or are so coupled, with one another. ♦♦

31. (WITHDRAWN - CURRENTLY AMENDED) The vehicle according to claim 18, wherein the connection gear-train (14) with the drive motor (18) of two neighboring drive wheels (4), which are located one after another, are inclined away from one another so that a free space, in a zone above and between the two neighboring drive wheels (4), is created. ♦♦

32. (WITHDRAWN) The vehicle according to claim 31, wherein in the free space at least parts of energy recovery units (42) for the electric motors (18) are placed.

33. (WITHDRAWN) The vehicle according to claim 18, wherein the drive motor (18) and the connecting gear-train (14) comprise a drive unit.

34. (WITHDRAWN - CURRENTLY AMENDED) A drive unit according to claim 18, wherein the drive unit is incorporated into ~~consisting of a drive motor (18) and a connecting gear-train (14) for use in a vehicle.~~ ♦♦

35. (CANCELED)